CHAPTER 6

RESTORATION PRIORITIES IN THE NORTH FORK HOLSTON RIVER WATERSHED

6.1. BACKGROUND.

The Watershed Water Quality Management Plan serves as a comprehensive inventory of resources and stressors in the watershed, a recommendation for control measures, and a guide for planning activities in the next five-year watershed cycle and beyond. Water quality improvement will be a result of implementing both regulatory and nonregulatory programs.

In addition to the NPDES program, some state and federal regulations, such as the TMDL and ARAP programs, address point and nonpoint issues. Construction and MS4 storm water rules (implemented under the NPDES program) have transitioned from Phase 1 to Phase 2. More information on storm water rules may be found at: http://www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/stormh2o/MS4.htm.

This Chapter addresses point and nonpoint source approaches to water quality problems in the Tennessee portion of the North Fork Holston River Watershed.

6.2. COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS. Watershed meetings are open to the public, and most meetings were represented by citizens who live in the watershed, NPDES permitees, business people, farmers, and local river conservation interests. Locations for meetings were chosen after consulting with people who live and work in the watershed. Everyone with an interest in clean water is encouraged to be a part of the public meeting process. The times and locations of watershed meetings are posted at: The times and locations of watershed meetings are posted at: http://www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/watershed/public.php.

6.2.A. Year 1 Public Meeting. The first North Fork Holston River Watershed public meeting was held September 24, 1998 at the courthouse in Kingsport. The goals of the meeting were to: (1) present, and review the objectives of, the Watershed Approach, (2) introduce local, state, and federal agency and nongovernment organization partners, (3) review water quality monitoring strategies, and (4) solicit input from the public.

Major Concerns/Comments

- Water quality should be high enough to support all instream aquatic life and to promote public health
- Toxic substances should be reduced
- Exposure of contaminated silt during lake draw downs, and movement of these toxics downstream after heavy rains, should be minimized
- More education, including the advantages of vegetated buffer strips, should be promoted
- Failing septic tanks
- Inappropriate land use
- More and better testing of water quality
- Better public advertising for meetings should be developed
- Pollution trading credits should be avoided

6.2.B. Year 3 Public Meeting. The second North Fork Holston River Watershed public meeting was held April 16, 2001 at the Kingsport Public Library. The goals of the meeting were to: (1) provide an overview of the watershed approach, (2) review the monitoring strategy, (3) summarize the most recent water quality assessment, (4) discuss the TMDL schedule and citizens' role in commenting on draft TMDLs, and (5) discuss BMPs and other nonpoint source tools available through the Tennessee Department of Agriculture 319 Program and NRCS conservation assistance programs.

6.2.C. Year 5 Public Meeting. The third scheduled North Fork Holston River Watershed public meeting was held January 23, 2006 at the Renaissance Center in Kingsport. The meeting was held jointly with the South Fork Holston River Watershed and featured six educational components:

- Overview of draft Watershed Water Quality Management Plan slide show
- SmartBoard™ with interactive GIS maps
- Benthic macroinvertebrate samples and interpretation
- "How We Monitor Streams" self-guided slide show
- "Why We Do Biological Sampling" self-guided slide show
- Boone Partnership display

In addition, citizens had the opportunity to make formal comments on the draft Watershed Water Quality Management Plan.

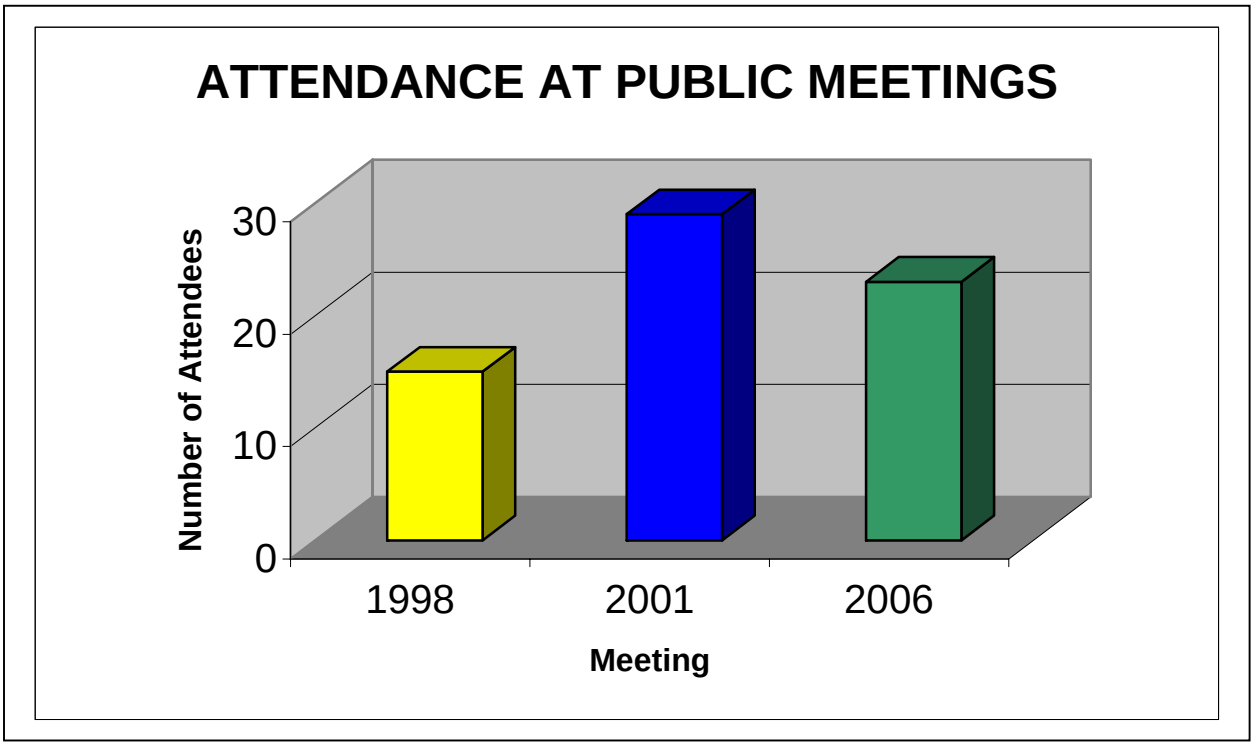

Figure 6-1. Attendance at Public Meetings in the North Fork Holston River Watershed. *Meeting attendance numbers represent South Fork Holston River and North Fork Holston River Watersheds joint meetings. Attendance numbers do not include TDEC personnel.*

Figure 6-2. Informal Discussions Among Residents of the Watershed Are an Important Part of TDEC's Watershed Meetings.

Figure 6-3. The SmartBoard™ is an Effective Interactive Tool to Teach Citizens About the Power of GIS.

Figure 6-4. The Watershed Meetings are a Good Opportunity for Local Citizen-Based Watershed Groups to Share What They are Doing to Promote Clean Water.

6.3. APPROACHES USED.

6.3.A. Point Sources. Point source contributions to stream impairment are primarily addressed by NPDES and ARAP permit requirements and compliance with the terms of the permits. Notices of NPDES and ARAP draft permits available for public comment can be viewed at http://www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/wpcppo/. Discharge monitoring data submitted by NPDES-permitted facilities may be viewed at http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/pcs/pcs_query_java.html.

The purpose of the TMDL program is to identify remaining sources of pollution and allocate pollution control needs in places where water quality goals are still not being achieved. TMDL studies are tools that allow for a better understanding of load reductions necessary for impaired streams to return to compliance with water quality standards. More information about Tennessee's TMDL program may be found at: http://www.state.tn.us/environment/wpc/tmdl/.

TMDLs are prioritized for development based on many factors.

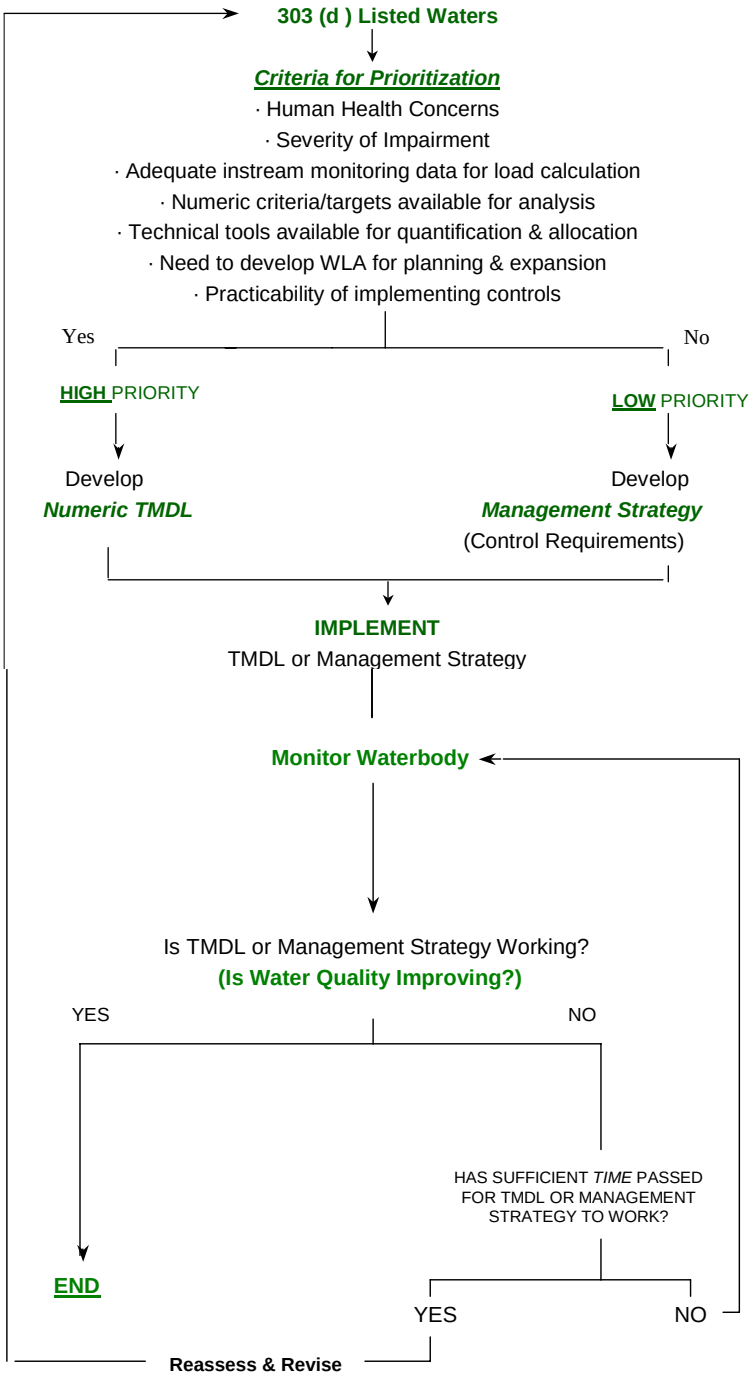

Figure 6.5. Prioritization Scheme for TMDL Development.